

# Creating the Space: Hosting an Alignment Conversation

## Introduction to Alignment Conversations

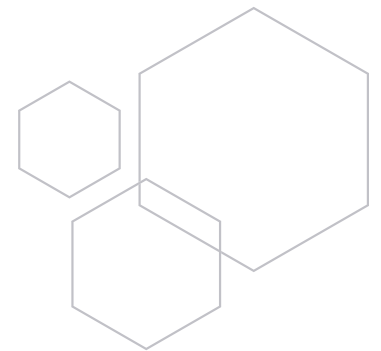
Hosting conversations about alignment is a courageous step to take as a leader. In these conversations you will be asking people to think clearly and specifically about not just what needs to be done, but how to do it together. These can be challenging conversations because people use ambiguity to avoid doing things that are challenging or that they feel are distracting them from what should be their priorities.

As an Aligned Leader, you will need to create the space for people to get into the right conversations quickly. The [Alignment Worksheet](#) is a tool for you to use to guide the discussions and keep the visibility and energy on the work of aligning to a shared goal.

## In preparation

Before you dive into the worksheet, there are a few things you can do to prepare for an effective discussion:

- Remember that alignment isn't a one-and-done activity. Plan a series of discussions to advance the thinking and to build alignment over time.
- The first meeting might need to be longer, but going forward, think about doing 20-30 minute super-focused discussions. Small bursts of attention over time will get you further than long, intensive efforts. Think about mixing up the timing so some meetings are quick and focused, others are longer and more exploratory.
- Your job is to create the container for the discussion with useful boundaries without being overly directive and authoritarian. You are the host, not the megaphone.
- This is not a 'telling' conversation, it is a 'listen and learn' conversation.



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## The 4Cs

When you have a situation where you need to create alignment to a shared goal, engaging other people in talking through the 4Cs is a great first step. This framework focuses people on having the tough conversations about HOW to deliver together.

- **Clarity:** Give some thought ahead of time to your own stories and examples that will help people to connect with the work that lies ahead. How can you share something of your own experience that will help people to make sense of the ask?
- **Connection:** Consider current connections that you can leverage and strengthen, and ways that you can demonstrate your appreciation for the impact this work may have on other priorities throughout the business.
- **Commitment:** Think of a time when you were able to overcome a difficult challenge by staying committed to the end goal and think about sharing that or asking others to share their own examples. Ask the group to reflect on what can be learned from those experiences.
- **Courage:** Watch for areas where the group avoids going too deep – that’s a good sign there is something to be solved in terms of how to work together. Remember that small steps taken consistently over time are more powerful than big leaps that fall short.

“To go fast, go alone,  
To go far, go together,  
To go far fast, *get aligned.*”

– OUR TAKE ON AN OLD PROVERB

# ALIGNMENT WORKSHEET

## CLARITY

*What needs to be made visible?  
What will be hard?  
What conversations need  
to happen?  
Think of your own stories you  
can share to build confidence:*

## CONNECTION

*Who are you connected to  
who can help? Where do you  
need new connections?  
What areas of the business do  
you need to understand?  
What are you most curious about?*

## COMMITMENT

*What habits need to change?  
When do you think it will get  
hard to hold the line?  
How can you stay optimistic?*

## COURAGE

*How could you start with self and  
make your own alignment visible?  
What's being avoided that  
needs to be solved?  
How can you inspire others to  
stand on the edge with you?*

